



Adsum

Adsum is published by the seminarians of **Mater Dei Seminary** for the enjoyment of our families, friends, and benefactors.

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The month of October is liturgically rich with many special feasts: Holy Guardian Angels, St. Theresa of Lisieux, St. Francis of Assisi, the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Christ the King. However, this month is very special for our seminary and academy because we celebrate our titular feast — the Divine Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Pope Pius XI instituted this feast in 1931 to commemorate the fifteenth centenary of the Council of Ephesus (431). In his encyclical *Lux Veritatis*, Pope Pius XI brilliantly emphasized three great dogmas of our Catholic faith: the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ — two natures, the divine and the human, in one Person; the Divine Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and the supreme teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff in matters of faith and morals (manifested by Pope Celestine I's ratification of the decrees of the Council of Ephesus).

This doctrine of the Divine Maternity was beautifully referred to by Pope Pius IX in his Apostolic Constitution *Ineffabilis Deus* (December 8, 1854) when he proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception:

“From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for His only-begotten Son a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, He would be born into this world... The Catholic Church, directed by the Holy Spirit of God, is the pillar and base of truth and has ever held as divinely revealed and as contained in the deposit of heavenly rev-

elation this doctrine concerning the original innocence of the august Virgin — **a doctrine which is so perfectly in harmony with her wondrous sanctity and pre-eminent dignity as Mother of God** — and thus has never ceased to explain, to teach, and to foster this doctrine day after day in many ways and by solemn acts.”

Furthermore, when Pope Pius XII defined the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in his Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*, (November 1, 1950) he also reiterated that Our Lady's privileges and prerogatives follow from **“the incomparable dignity of her Divine Motherhood.”**

As can be plainly seen, the love and praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Catholic Church down through the centuries is a fulfillment of prophecy made in the Gospel of St. Luke. When St. Elizabeth, “filled with the Holy Ghost,” extolled the Virgin Mary with the words, “Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; and how is it that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:42-43) The Blessed Virgin responded with her hymn of praise to God, the *Magnificat* and exclaimed,

“My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. Because He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaid; **for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.**” (Luke 1:46-48)

We, too, fulfill this prophecy when we honor the Mother of God by the devout wearing of her brown scapular and the faithful recitation of her rosary. As the mission of our seminary is the spiritual formation of our seminarians to be other Christs as priests, how appropriate that our patroness is the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Mother of God and our own dear Mother!

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI





The Blessing of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Seneca, Wisconsin



Solemn High Mass in honor of St. Theresa of Lisieux



*Our two new editions at the convent:
Claudia (in the front), a Jersey heifer born of our cow Isabella,
and Balboa (in the rear), an Angus steer born of our cow Isidora,
are bottle fed twice a day*



The Brothers fight off the bees and yellow jackets as they grind and press a truck load of apples to make cider

Answers to Questions about a Vocation
Excerpts from *Religion: Doctrine and Practice*
by Fr. Francis Cassilly, S.J.

Who has a vocation to religious life?

He has a vocation to religious life who:

1. Is prevented by no impediment or obstacle;
2. Has a firm resolution and desire to enter from a good motive;
3. Has the needful qualifications of soul and mind and body; and finally
4. Is accepted by the lawful superior and allowed to make his vows.

a. Young people sometimes worry about their vocation; they wonder how they may know whether they are called. They must not expect an angel to tell them. Each person *must work out the problem for himself*. If, after reflecting that Christ has invited him to His service, as He does invite all, a young person determines to excel in this service, and resemble Christ more closely by following Him in the practice of the counsels, he need not fear to go on. If, further, he feels confident that with God's grace he can live up to the obligations of the religious state, and he finds a religious superior who is willing to take him, he has all the vocation he needs. Only one thing more is required to make the vocation complete—to enter and persevere. It is always advisable, however, for a person to consult his confessor before coming to a final decision.

b. Some persons fancy that all who are called to the religious life must have a *strong attraction* or inclination toward it, and because they do not feel this attraction they think they have no vocation. But this is a mistake. A vocation does not consist in the feelings but in the will and determination. In fact, almost everyone feels a dislike or repugnance to the duties and obligations connected with life under obedience, because these are hard and disagreeable to nature. But they who are convinced that this manner of life is best for them and in accordance with God's wish, will rely on His grace to make smooth their pathway and turn bitter things to sweet when done for His sake. A person, then, who determines to become a religious must



indeed have a firm resolution from good motives to do so, but he need not wait for an interior impulse or *spiritual attraction* which may never come, and *is not necessary*.

c. In the Gospel we read of the young man who came to Jesus and asked Him what he must do to have life everlasting. Jesus replied, " 'Keep the commandments'... The young man saith to Him: 'All these have I kept from my youth, what is yet wanting to me?' Jesus saith to him: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow Me.'" (Matt. xix:16-22). Here the young man received an invitation to the perfect life, but he *declined it* and *went away sad*, for he had great possessions which he was unwilling to give up even for Christ's sake. And there are many today who prefer to follow the young man rather than Jesus Who calls them.

Is virginity a higher state than marriage?

Yes, virginity is a higher state than marriage.

a. Our Lord when asked by the Apostles if it were not better to refrain from marriage replied, "All men take not this word, but they to whom it is given... He

that can take it, let him take it" (Matt. xix:11,12). Here Christ praises virginity above marriage. While, then, marriage is a holy state, virginity is holier still. This is also in accord with the teaching of St. Paul: "He that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well; and he that giveth her not doth better" (I Cor. vii:38).

b. One of the advantages of an unmarried life is that it does not divide the heart. St. Paul tells us: "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your profit: not to cast a snare upon you" (I Cor. vii:32-25).

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

by Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D., L.H.D.

The Precious Five-Dollar Bill

Question: A clerk stole a five-dollar bill from the desk of his wealthy employer and spent it. Afterward, he discovered that the bill was a rare collector's item, worth more than a thousand dollars. What was the gravity of the clerk's sin of theft, and what is to be said of his obligation to make restitution?

Answer: Objectively the clerk committed a grave sin, since a thousand dollars greatly exceeds the absolute sum for serious matter, however rich his employer may be. If he was in invincible ignorance of the extraordinary value of this particular piece of currency and believed he was committing a sin of injustice only to the extent of five dollars, the theft was subjectively venial, since the employer is described as a wealthy man. If, when he discovers the special value of the bill there is no longer any reasonable hope of recovering it, he satisfies his obligation of restitution (binding *sub levi*) by restoring five dollars to his employer, since he disposed of the money in good faith, as regards its special worth, and has become no richer from this standpoint.

However, if there is a chance that he can get back the original five-dollar bill (for example, from the store where he spent it shortly before he found out its great value) he is bound to make this effort; and this obligation binds *sub gravi* (under pain of serious sin), and according to the common teaching as a duty of *justice*. Hence, if he neglects to make this attempt when the recovery of the bill could be hoped for, and later it becomes impossible to locate it, he would be bound to restore the full value of the currency — that is, a thousand dollars, or at least an amount proportionate to the hope he had of recovering the bill. However, there would be no obligation to make a search or later to make full restitution if the attempt to find the money would be likely to be gravely detrimental to him (for example, if it might lead to a lengthy prison term). On the other hand, if the employer finds out that the clerk was the thief, he could lawfully bring suit against him for the entire amount, even though the clerk disposed of the money in good faith as regards its special value and could not later recover it. And, if the verdict of the court requires restitution of the full value of the bill, the thief would be bound in conscience to pay it.

Cheating in Schools and Colleges

Question: It seems that much cheating is going on in schools and colleges. The Saturday Evening Post for Jan. 9, 1960, contained a startling article on the prevalence of this practice in American educational institutions. Apparently some young persons see no harm in cheating. What is to be said of the morality of this mode of conduct? What of the gravity of a sin that may be committed by cheating?

Answer : Cheating in school is a sin against the eighth commandment. In other words, it is a lie. The pupil who hands in an examination paper asserts implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) that he has used no other help than those that are permitted, such as (in some instances) a dictionary. He is understood to state that he has made no use of such forbidden helps as hidden notes, secret communication with the others who are taking the examination, etc. Hence, if he has made use of prohibited help, his submitting of the paper is a lie in action.

Cheating may also be a sin against the seventh commandment, a sin of injustice. For example, if a pupil through cheating wins a valuable prize, a scholarship, or a cherished honor, he is violating commutative justice, equivalent to theft, against the person whose honest efforts actually entitled him to the prize or honor. The cheat may also violate charity and legal justice—that is, if through his dishonest methods he manages to pass an examination that wins for him a post of responsibility for which he is actually incompetent. This would be true for a student, who by cheating gained admission to the medical profession where his ineptitude may do much harm. This would also be applicable to the law student, and above all to the candidate for the priesthood, who would thus unjustly gain admission to their respective professions.

Cheating in a case where no matter of great importance would depend on the examination would be a venial sin. But when a valuable prize or an honor of great distinction was thus won, or when the falsification may be seriously harmful to society, the cheater would be guilty of mortal sin.

Adsum, a publication by the seminarians of **MATER DEI SEMINARY** for the reading enjoyment of friends and benefactors, is sent free of charge to all who request it. If you are interested, please provide your name and mailing address to:

MATER DEI SEMINARY
7745 Military Avenue
Omaha NE 68134-3356